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The Subjunctive in Latin

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The Subjunctive in Latin

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THE SUBJUNCTIVE IN LATIN

A. Independent Constructions

I Hortatory Subjunctive (neg. *ne*)

1. Exhortation

e. g. *Eamus.* Let us go.

2. Command

e. g. *Doceas iter et sacra ostia pandas.*

Show us the way and open the sacred portals.

3. Prohibition

e. g. (a) *Cave putes.* Don't suppose.

(b) *Ne hoc feceris.* Don't do this.

II Optative Subjunctive (neg. *ne*.)

1. Wish possible of fulfillment

a. Simple future wish

e. g. Incolumes sint mei cives.

May my fellow citizens be unharmed.

b. Construction after verbs of fearing (aff. *ne*, neg. *ut*)

e. g. Vereor ne hoc faciat. I

fear that he may do this (lit. I fear: may he not do this.)

2. Wishes impossible of fulfillment

a. Present time (imperfect subj.)

e. g. Utinam esset. Would that he were here.

b. Pst time (pluperfect subjunctive

e. g. Utinam adfuisset. I wish that he had been here.

III Deliberative or Dubitative Subjunctive (neg. *non*)

1. Doubt

e. g. Quid facerem? What was I to do?

What was I to do?

2. Indignation

e. g. An ego non venirem? What, should I not have come?

2.

IV Potential Subjunctive (neg. *non*)

1. Possibility

e. g. Dicat aliquis. Someone may say.

2. Modesty

e. g. Pace tua dixerim. I would say by your leave.

B. Subordinate Constructions

(introducing a few indicatives for comparison and completeness of exposition.)

I. Conditions (aff. *si*; neg. *nisi, si non*)

1. Particular conditions

a. Pure

(1) Simple conditions nothing implied)

(a) Present Time (*Pres.**Ind. both members*)

e. g. Si adest, bene
est.

If he is present,
it is well.

(b) Past Time (*Imp. or
Perf. Ind. both
members*)

e. g. Si aderat, bene
erat.

If he was present, it
was well.

(2) Future conditions

(a) Vivid future (*Fut.**Ind. both members*)

e. g. Si aderit, bene
erit.

If he is present,
it will be
well.

- (b) Less vivid future
(*Pres. Subj.* both mem-
bers)

e. g. Si adsit, bene
sit.

If he should be
present, it
would be
well.

- (3) Contrary to fact conditions

- (a) Present time (*Imp. Subj.* both members)

e. g. Si adesset, bene
esset.

If he were pres-
ent, it would
be well.

(b) Past time (*Pluper.*

Subj. both members)

e. g. Si adfuisset,
bene fuisset.

If he had been
present, it
would have
been well.

a. Relative conditions (introduced by a *relative pronoun* or *relative adverb*) may take any of the constructions of pure conditions.

e. g. Philosophia, cui *qui* pareat
omne tempus aetatis sine molestia possit
degere. Philosophy, which if any would
obey, he would be able to spend his whole
life without vexation.

C. Comparison

I. 1. Conditional Clauses of Comparison (introduced by *tamquam*, *tamquamsi*, *quasi*, *ac si*, *ut si*, *velut si*, *ceu*, all meaning "as if" and *quam si* meaning "than if") take the Subjunctive according to Sequence of Tenses.

e. g. Hic ingentem pugnam cernimus ceu cetera nusquam bella forent.
Here we saw a great battle, as if there were no fighting eslewehere.

2. General conditions usually have the same forms as Particular conditions but sometimes employ the *imperfect* and *pluperfect Subjunctive* in the protasis with the *imperfect Indicative* in the apodosis to express a repeated or customary action in past time.

e. g. Si quis a domino prehen-
deretur concursu militum eripiebatur. If
anyone was arrested by his master, he was
(always) rescued by a mob of soldiers.

II. Purpose

1. Pure Purpose (aff. *ut*, neg. *ne*)

e. g. Remi legatos miserunt ut pacem
peterent. The Remi sent ambassadors
to seek peace.

2. Relative Purpose

a. Introduced by a *simple relative*

e. g. Militer misit *qui* pontem
interscinderent. He sent soldiers to des-
troy the bridge.

b. Introduced by *ne*, *quon-
iuns* following affirmative, by *quin* follow-
ing negative verb of *hindering*, *refusing* or
doubting.

e. g. Non recusant *quin* armis contendant. They do not refuse to fight.

3. Substantive Clauses of Purpose
(after verbs meaning to admonish, ask, bargain, command, decree, determine, permit, persuade, resolve, urge and wish) aff. *ut*, neg. *ne*.

e. g. Helvetiis persuasit ut exirent. He persuaded the Helvetians to go forth.

III. Result

1. Pure Result (aff. *ut*, neg. *ut non*)

e. g. Nemo tam stultus est ut hoc non sciat. No one is so foolish as not to know this.

2. Relative Result (neg. *quin*, *qui non*)

e. g. *Nemo est tam senex qui se tannum non putet.* Nobody is so old as not to think that he can live a year.

3. Substantive Clause of Result (aff. *ut*, neg. *ut non*)

e. g. *Efficiamut intelligis.* I shall make you understand.

IV. Relative Clause of Characteristic (neg. *non*)

e. g. *Erant qui Catilinam misereantur.* There were those who pitied Catiline.

V. Time'

1. Conditional Relative Clauses (introduced by *ubi*, *ut*, *cum*, *quando*, "whenever") have constructions of Protasis of General Conditions.

e. g. *Id ubi dixisset, hastam in fines eorum mittebat.* Whenever he had said this, he would cast the spear into their territories.

2. Clauses with *cum* "when" defining or emphasizing the time take the Indicative; describing the circumstances (usually *imperfect* or *pluperfect* tense), the Subjunctive.

e. g. *Cum id nuntiatum esset, Romam maturat.* When this had been reported he hastens to Rome.

3. Clauses with *antequam* and *priusquam* "before" take the Subjunctive when they imply *purpose* or *expectancy*, otherwise the Indicative.

e. g. *Priusquam telum abici posset, omnis acies terga vertit.* Before a weapon could be thrown, the whole line fled.

4. Clauses with *dum* and *quoad* "until" implying *intention* or *expectancy* take the present or imperfect Subjunctive.

Expectabo dum veritatem dicat.
I shall wait until he speaks the truth.

5. Clauses introduced by *postquam*, *posteaquam* "after"; *ubi* "when"; *ut* "as", "when"; *ut primum*, *simul*, *simul atque*, *simul ac* "as soon as"; *donec* and *quoad* "until" (denoting actual fact); *dum*, *donec* and *quoad* "as long as"; and *dum* "while" take the Indicative.

VI. Cause

1. Clauses introduced by *cum* take the Subjunctive.

e. g. Quae cum ita sint, nobis date obsides. Since things are so, give us hostages.

2. Clauses introduced by *quod* and *quia* take the Indicative, when the reason is given on the authority of the *writer* or *speaker*; the Subjunctive when the reason is given on the authority of *some other person*.

e. g. Aedui Caesari gratias egerunt quod se periculo liberavisset. The Aedui gave thanks to Caesar because (*as they said*) he had freed them from danger.

3. Clauses introduced by *quoniam* or *quando* always take the Indicative because they always give the reason on the authority of the speaker or writer.

VII. Concession

1. Clauses introduced by *quamquam* "*although*" take the Indicative because they state admitted facts.

2. Clauses introduced by *cum*, *quamvis*, *ut*, *ne*, *licet* take the Subjunctive.

e. g. *Quamvis sis molesta, numquam te esse confitebor malum.* Although you may be troublesome, I shall never confess that you are an evil.

VIII. Proviso

1. Clauses introduced by *dum*, *modo*, *dummodo*, *tantum ut* take the Subjunctive.

e. g. *Oderint, dum metuant.* Let them hate, provided they fear.

IX. Indirect Questions

1. Questions referring to *present* or *past* time take a primary or secondary tense of the Subjunctive.

e. g. *Rogat me quid sentiam.* He asks me what I think.

2. Questions referring to *future* time take a Subjunctive of the *first periphrastic conjugation*.

e. g. *Prospicio qui concursus futuri sint.* I foresee what throngs there will be.

X. Indirect Discourse

1. Formal indirect discourse is governed by verbs of *knowing, telling, thinking, and perceiving, promising, hoping, expecting, threatening and swearing*.

a. Declarative sentences usually have their main clause in the Infinitive with Subject Accusative; and their subordinate clauses (following sequence of introductory verb) in the Subjunctive (unless they are *merely explanatory* or contain statements which are regarded as true independently of the quotation or as emphasizing a fact.)

e. g. (1) *Dicit esse non nullos* quorum auctoritas plurimum *valeat*.
He says that there are some whose authority most prevails.

(2) *Quis neget haec omnia quae videmus* deorum potestate administrari? Who denies that all these things which we see are ruled by the power of the gods?

b. Verbs of resolving, persuading, commanding and the like may take either the Infinitive with Subject Accusative, like verbs of saying, or a Substantive Clause of Purpose or Result.

e. g. *Res ipsa monebat tempus esse*. The thing itself warned that it was time.

c. Questions

(1). Real questions expecting answers are put into the Subjunctive.

e. g. Ariovistus respondit: quid sibi *vellet*? Ariviosus responded: what did he want?

(2). Rhetorical questions asked for effect and implying their own answer are put into the Infinitive.

e. g. His Casear ita respondit: num recentium injuriarum memoriam (se) deponere *posse*? To these arguments Casear responded thus: Could he lay aside the memory of recent wrongs?

d. All Imperative forms of speech take the Subjunctive.

e. g. Dixit: finem faciat. He said: let him make an end.

e. Conditions put their Protases into the Subjunctive in accordance with the sequence of tenses, their Apodoses into some form of the Infinitive.

(1). Simple conditions have their apodoses in the Present or Perfect Infinitive according as the time of the main verb in the direct discourse was present or past.

(2). Future Conditions, vivid and less vivid, both have their apodoses in the Future Infinitive and are therefore indistinguishable from each other.

(3). Conditions Contrary to Fact.

(a) The Protasis remains unchanged in tense.

(b) The Apodosis, *if active*, takes an infinitive formed by combining the participle in *urus* with *fuisse*.

(c) The Apodosis, if *passive*, or lacking a supine stem, takes the *Imperfect Subjunctive* after the periphrastic expression *futurus fuisse ut*.

(d). An Indicative in the Apodosis becomes the Perfect Infinitive.

2. Informal indirect discourse (when a clause depends upon another containing a wish, command or question expressed indirectly) puts the subordinate clause into the Subjunctive.

e. g. Huic imperat quas *possit* adeat civitates. He orders him to visit what states he can.

XI. Subjunctive of Integral Part (Attraction)

e. g. Imperat, dum res *iudicetur*,
hominem adservent. He orders them, till
the affair should be decided, to keep the
man.

